

THE QĀḌĪZĀDELI MOVEMENT AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAMIC REVIVALISM  
IN THE SEVENTEENTH- AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Preliminary Notes

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**THE QĀḌĪZĀDELI MOVEMENT  
AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAMIC REVIVALISM  
IN THE SEVENTEENTH- AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY  
OTTOMAN EMPIRE**

*Preliminary Notes*

As an offshoot of an evolving study<sup>2</sup> on Islamic revivalism in the post-classical period (1258–1798)<sup>3</sup> this working paper<sup>4</sup> signals some key issues and research trajectories in Islamic religious history during the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire. Rooted in the previous period, but also projected onto later modern times, some of these ideas and practices shaped and reshaped Islam in the territories under Ottoman domination. Foregrounding the under-researched ideas and practices advocated by the violently puritan Qāḏīzādeli movement (1620s–1680s), this paper draws some parallels between the Qāḏīzādeli type of religious revivalism and orthodoxy kindled by Sheikh Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb

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- 2 I would like to thank Dale F. Eickelman and Rudolph Peters for their generous support and helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper. I am also grateful to Ulrike Freitag and Alexander Knysh for their suggestions and commitment at the very inception of this project. I am especially indebted to Ottomanist Rossitsa Gradeva for her persistent encouragement of my belief that the Ottoman Qāḏīzādeli movement deserves to be examined by a scholar of Middle Eastern and Islamic studies.
- 3 Succeeding early and “classical Islam,” the “post-classical” period in Middle Eastern and Islamic history comprises the long era between the fall of the ‘Abbāsīd dynasty (750–1258 A.D.), which resulted from the devastation of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258, and the commencement of Napoleon Bonaparte’s expedition to Egypt in 1798, which marks the beginning of the modern colonial era in the history of the Middle East. Until recently, Western scholarship on the history of Islam and Muslim societies had for a long time viewed the post-1798 period as “modern” *stricto sensu*. Thus the impact of the West was seen as “the key to the transformation of the East and to its passage to modernity, regardless of their actual starting points” (Ze’evi 2004, 77), while the entire pre-1798 era from the rise of Islam in the seventh century A.D. has been loosely defined as “medieval” or, more broadly, as “pre-modern.”
- 4 This working paper presents only a first stage of my work on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Islamic revivalism – a project initiated firstly with the support of the Advanced Academia Program at the Centre for Advanced Study (CAS), Sofia, in the vibrant international community of which I was a 2011 Research Fellow. In addition, the preliminary notes here presented include ideas partially evolving from a 2012 Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship, for which I would like to also acknowledge the generous support of the University of Pennsylvania’s American Research Institute in Turkey (ARIT), Istanbul. For some aspects of this research I would like to also acknowledge the support of the Bulgarian National Science Fund for the collaborative project “Religion and the Public Space: Interdisciplinary Approaches” of Sofia University’s Center for the Study of Religions.

(1703–1792) and other Middle Eastern religious scholars (*‘ulamā*) and leaders. As part of a larger ongoing research project, the draft analysis here unfolds as an argument around the concepts and approaches applied to the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Islamic revivalism. The notion of “orthodoxy” in the study of Islam is examined against the backdrop of “revivalism” by foregrounding its “restorationist” dimensions to suggest a nuanced insight into the grasp of the major seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Sunnī movements. Focusing primarily on the intra-communal Muslim religious interplay between the imperial center of Istanbul and the Ottoman Arab lands, this study adds a comparative consideration to connect them with the Balkans. Seeking to further understand the key trajectories of the highly complex “fundamentalist spirit” allegedly spanning the Ottoman universe in these two centuries, the paper participates in the debates on the typology of Islamic revivalist movements.

The Qāḍīzādeli movement’s “fundamentalist challenge”<sup>5</sup> and “discordant revivalism”<sup>6</sup> evolved from a passionately devout, markedly anti-mystical group of Muslim mosque preachers<sup>7</sup> on the periphery of the Ottoman religious establishment – the *‘ulamā*’ hierarchy called *‘ilmiye* in Ottoman Turkish. Acquiring the reputation of strict, rigorous and pious Muslim preachers among their supporters, but designated by some Ottoman sources left by their Sufi adversaries as “people of bigotry” (*ehl-i ta’aşşub*),<sup>8</sup> the Qāḍīzādelis prevailed over their rivals in seventeenth-century Istanbul under the successive leadership of Qāḍīzāde<sup>9</sup> Meḥmed Efendi (d. 1635), the Damascene by birth and education Uşuvānī (d. 1661) and Vānī Meḥmed Efendi (d. 1684). They gripped Ottoman religious and public life during the reign of Sultan Murād IV, but began to be identified as “Qāḍīzādelis” during the height of their activities around 1061/1650–1651<sup>10</sup> – a time coinciding with the reign of Sultan Meḥmed IV.<sup>11</sup>

During Murād’s reign coffeehouses and tobacco were banned on pain of death under Qāḍīzādeli pressure.<sup>12</sup> Smoking infractions resulted in a huge number of executions by dismemberment, impaling or hanging.<sup>13</sup> The eminent Ottoman historian Ḥajjī Khalīfa, known as Kātib Çelebi (d. 1657), relates the execution of “fifteen or twenty leading men of the army” on a charge of smoking during a military expedition against Baghdad undertaken by Murād IV. Despite the “severest torture” in the presence of the Sultan, however, “some of the soldiers carried short pipes in their sleeves, some in their pockets, and they found an opportunity to smoke even during the executions.” Although telling about social and religious

5 Zilfi (1988), 134.

6 Zilfi (1986), 251–269.

7 Arabic *wu’āz* (sing. *wā’iz*); Turkish *vaiz*.

8 Terzioğlu (1999), 199.

9 In Modern Turkish transliteration – Kadizade, “the son of a judge.”

10 Here and in elsewhere in the text, the first figure prior to the slash indicates the date according to the Muslim calendar after *hijra*, while the figure after the slash shows the date in Christian era.

11 Na’īmā, *Tārīḥ*, 1280/1863, Vol. 5, 54–59; Vol. 6, 227–241. See also Terzioğlu (1999), 202.

12 Na’īmā, *Tārīḥ*, 1280/1863, Vol. 6, 231.

13 Ricaut, Sir Paul, *The History of the Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, 1686, I, 59, 79.

developments, the Qāḍīzādeli-influenced ban on smoking was not a success story: “Even during this rigorous prohibition, the number of smokers exceeded that of the non-smokers.”<sup>14</sup>

The appointment of the Qāḍīzādelis as Friday preachers provided them with direct access to the public, and their career path quickly offered them control over the so-called imperial mosques, such as Hagia Sophia (Aya Sofya), Sultan Aḍmed, Süleymaniye, Beyazid, Fātiḥ, Selim I, and Şehzāde. Endowed over the centuries by the reigning lines of the Ottoman family, those imperial mosques were “inherently egalitarian,”<sup>15</sup> and apart from their ritual functions were a major venue for socializing and public discussions. It is telling that initially the Qāḍīzādelis were called “Birgawī followers” (Tur. *Birgivi hulefasi*) or simply “Birgawīs” (Tur. *Birgiviler*), since all of them were religiously and intellectually inspired by the influential conservative religious scholar Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī al-Birgawī, known also as Birgili<sup>16</sup> Meḥmed Efendi (d. 1573). His popularity spanned the entire Muslim world and he became “more than the author of much-copied works”<sup>17</sup> extensively referenced and commented in both Ottoman Turkish and Arabic languages.

Why then do the Qāḍīzādelis seem so enigmatic and invisible outside of Istanbul, when there is an apparent, though not sufficiently articulated, scholarly intuition of their transregional and cross-temporal significance? Were the Qāḍīzādelis a part of an interrelated set of Islamic “fundamentalist” impulses, and if so, what was their role in the spread of Islamic revivalist ideas? Did this metropolitan movement influence an entire complex network of revivalist groups during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, or was it rather one of the (inter)acting groups within a more general trend? What underlay and motivated the Qāḍīzādelis in their efforts to Islamize their social world, which they perceived as fallen into the condition of unbelief? In the long run, did the Qāḍīzādeli mode of adherence to Islam contribute to a transregional consolidation and transformation of *sharī’a*-minded Islamic revivalism calling for return to an idealized past exemplified by the time of the Prophet Muḥammad and the early Muslim community (*umma*)? The answers to such questions require new empirical research, interpretive themes and approaches by re-conceptualizing the spread of religious, including revivalist, ideas.

Older models of the spread of ideas would locate an epicenter and assume diffusion throughout a given region. The analysis here makes the argument for a more interactive spread – a process in which regional variations could have a reciprocal influence, all driven by a shared pattern of adherence to Islam while striving to revive “true” religious observance and daily practices. Besides, much research has

14 Kātib Çelebi, *The Balance of Truth* (1957), 51–52.

15 See Zilfi (1988), 129–130.

16 But also as Birgiwī, Birgivi, or even Birkawī. The variations are caused by the different readings of the Arabic letter *kāf* (ك) modified as *gef* (گ) to be used by the Ottomans for expressing the Turkish “g,” in this case for writing the city name Birgi, as well as by the alternative of adopting either an Arabic or an Ottoman Turkish adjective ending.

17 Cook (2004), 328.

yet to be undertaken on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century revivalism against the backdrop of the *longue durée* within the larger Islamic tradition and society. Without neglecting the specificity of each social context, however, is it possible to delineate the contours of a shared pattern of adherence to Islam that characterizes these two Ottoman centuries as a period of a shared “fundamentalist stance” to religious belief and practice? Islamic intellectual history, and particularly the substantive teachings of the revivalist movements and their leaders in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, has yet scarcely been examined. Since the study of these teachings is a relatively recent undertaking, any attempt to make a valid generalization inevitably contains peril for the researcher.

Tentatively, one can assume that there are traceable clues that intellectually, religiously, and in many cases socially and politically, connect the Qāḍīzādeli movement not only with what was before and after their own age, but also with what had happened in Islam outside of the Ottoman metropolitan center. However, as we shall see, this is an assumption that raises many questions related to ongoing theoretical debates and existing empirical deficiencies in the source material processed by scholars at this stage of research. In what follows, the analysis is restricted and structured along the lines of three interrelated subthemes relevant to the elaboration of a preliminary theoretical approach. I will analyze the issue of the typology of revivalism by discussing the concepts of “restorationism” and “orthodoxy” as corresponding with certain broader intellectual debates. I will then go on to an historiographical review of earlier and current research on the Qāḍīzādelis, suggesting a preliminary framework for analyzing its role in Islamic history and religious revivalism. Finally, in an attempt to illustrate a possible scale of comparison, I will suggest a working approach, briefly touching upon some cases whose detailed elaboration is, however, beyond the scope of the present preliminary notes.

## I

Revivalism is used in general here to refer to “a stance that formulates its critique of the contemporary state of affairs in terms of a return to an idealized early Islamic period.”<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, Islamic revival “involves a strengthening of the Islamic dimensions of society. However, intensification of Islamic identity is not identical with the characteristic patterns of revivalism.”<sup>19</sup> Focusing on the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, scholars such as John Voll<sup>20</sup> and Rudolph Peters<sup>21</sup> have suggested a typology of the “fundamentalist mode of Islamic experience.”<sup>22</sup> Voll considers three distinctive features as constitutive of Islamic revivalism: a

18 Hirschler (2005), 196.

19 Levzion and Voll (1988), 15.

20 Voll (1979), 145–166.

21 Peters (1987), 217–242.

22 Voll (1987), 88.

call for a return to the Qur'ān and the Sunna; a reaffirmation of authenticity, especially vis-à-vis syncretic tendencies; and, finally, an emphasis on the need to apply *ijtihād* – the independent Islamic legal reasoning.<sup>23</sup> Peters emphasizes that throughout the entire history of Islam there have been religious scholars who have attacked prevailing opinion on the obligatory character of *taqlīd* – the acceptance of or submission to authority, i.e. the authority of one of the four major schools of Islamic law (*madhhabs*). Shunning *taqlīd* and privileging a direct approach to the sources of Islam through *ijtihād*, such scholars in general “belonged to the fundamentalist tradition in Islam.”<sup>24</sup> According to Peters, fundamentalist thinking in Islam draws on two major “concept-pairs”: *sunna* (the normative example of the Prophet) versus *bid'a*<sup>25</sup> (a deviation from the *sunna*, or the opposite of the *sunna*); and *tawhīd* (monotheism) versus *shirk* (polytheism).<sup>26</sup> These abstract theological constructs are developed in religious thought and practice in many ways, including through the Muslim debates on the right to *ijtihād*, which allows direct access to the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth* in establishing what the *sunna* was and, consequently, in understanding the religious and social role of *taqlīd*.<sup>27</sup>

Proposing that it is possible to outline a typology of “fundamentalist Islam,” John Voll views eighteenth-century revivalism in particular as an important element in the “long tradition of the fundamentalist mode of the Islamic experience. This is the attempt to create the truly Islamic social order on the basis of a strict adherence to the fundamentals of Islam, without adaptation or compromise or cultural synthesis.”<sup>28</sup> It is thus claimed that such fundamentalist movements, intellectually inspired by *ḥadīth*-oriented scholars or “neo-Sufis,” spread out over the entire eighteenth-century Muslim world through informal educational networks that evolved under the influence of a small group of teachers centered on the holy cities of Mecca and Medina.<sup>29</sup> Can, however, the ideas and practices advocated by the Qāḍīzādelis in the seventeenth century be subsumed under the heading of such a typology? If yes, how would this enlarge the picture backward to the seventeenth century? If not, how then shall we be able to outline a larger picture of the historical processes in Islam during the late post-classical age?

Other researchers tend to follow the argument against such a typology suggested by Ahmad Dallal. He raises an elaborate critique of those scholarly claims that repeatedly speak of “Wahhābī influences” on the thought of the Indian Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī (d. 1762), the West African 'Uthmān Ibn Fūdī (d. 1817), and the north African Muḥammad 'Alī al-Sanūsī (d. 1859). On the basis of a thorough

23 Voll (1983), 32–47.

24 Peters (1980), 131.

25 Innovation, a belief or practice for which there is no precedent in the time of the Prophet Muḥammad. See Robson, “Bid'a,” EI. On *bid'a* as the converse to *sunna* and thus as a concept corresponding to “heresy,” see also Lewis (1953), 52–53.

26 *Shirk* is usually translated in Western languages as “polytheism,” but the term implies the meaning of “associationism,” i.e. the act of “associating” other deities to the oneness and unity of Allāh.

27 Peters (1987), 220–221.

28 Voll (1987), 88.

29 Voll (1975), 12.



study of their teachings, Dallal argues that “contrary to the accepted paradigm, the intellectual models produced by these scholars are quite distinct and cannot be grouped under one rubric.”<sup>30</sup> He questions “the theory of a united Islamic revivalism,” recognizing its attractiveness as a toolkit allowing researchers of Islam “to analyze and understand a complex set of variables in the context of one coherent whole. The connections made to achieve this coherence are at best fragile. Any familiarity with the perception of Wahhābism in the Islamic world would confirm the rather conspicuous status it has among most Muslims, which undermines any parallels between Wahhābis and other movements enjoying general or local recognition outside Arabia. Second, the general characterizations of the modern Islamic revival are not always applicable to specific instances of this revival.”<sup>31</sup>

The historian Bernard Haykel points out that in spite of its heuristic potential the theory of a united Islamic revivalism can indeed be misleading. In his study on the Yemeni scholar and reformer Muḥammad al-Shawkānī (d. 1834), he associates himself with Dallal’s opinion by emphasizing that “the substantive content of the ideologies of Islamic revival needs to be thoroughly researched before any broad generalizations can be made about the nature of Islamic thought in a given period or across a vast expanse of geographic space.”<sup>32</sup> Questioning the thesis of John Voll, Haykel rejects speculations linking different scholars to a common network on the ground that they may have studied together in the same educational circles. Haykel suggests that “one must attempt to link a given scholar’s ideology with the political and social contexts in which he is developing his views and then compare these with those of his teachers or peers from other regions of the Islamic world.”<sup>33</sup> The present study takes a “middle stance”: On the one hand, it shares Haykel’s and Dallal’s reservations, and on the other hand it is in accord with the search for a shared pattern of revivalist Islam initiated by Voll and Peters. As a matter of fact, even the scholars who have drafted a typology of Islamic revivalism remain cautious in their judgments, admitting that the “characteristic pattern of renewal and reform” exploring the “fundamentalist” mode of experience in the eighteenth century “has some limitations that are not always recognized.”<sup>34</sup> The search for such a pattern, involving particularly the seventeenth alongside the eighteenth century, would, of course, be possible only on the basis of a clearly defined scale of comparison and a closer scrutiny of the specific social context and cultural setting in which a given revivalist group had emerged and developed.

“Revivalism” opposes “traditionalism,” which “refers to segments of society that reject the critique of the existing state of affairs by stressing the need for continuing established praxis. These individuals reject, for instance, the wide-ranging

30 Dallal (1993), 341.

31 Ibid., 342.

32 Haykel (2003), 13.

33 Ibid., 13.

34 Levtzion and Voll (1988), 14.

revivalist understanding and application of *ijtihad*.<sup>35</sup> In other words, “revivalists” challenge the *status quo* upheld by the “traditionalists” by seeking to “restore” a *status quo ante*. Like many other toolkits, including “fundamentalism,” the term “restorationism” is loaded with connotations grounded in the history of Western Christianity, going back to “the birth of Christianity, rabbinic Judaism, early apocalyptic literature, and the prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible.”<sup>36</sup> In general, “restorationism” refers to a type of religious belief “whose adherents seek to pattern contemporary practice exclusively on ancient norms, exemplified by the behavior and teachings of the founder(s).”<sup>37</sup> It is in this sense that restorationist Islam, just like restorationist Christianity, not only opposes but often combats inherited historical traditions. The restoration of the founding ancient norms stipulates the rejection of historical mediation in achieving the allegedly authentic meaning of the divine revelation and its early understanding.

“Restorationsim” can thereby be adopted to test and further develop or, accordingly, modify (and even reject) some broader hypotheses, such as the following generalization of John Voll: “The ‘revival of religious faith’ in the eighteenth century becomes more exclusivist rather than synthesis-creating. There is an active voice of a mission for sociomoral reconstruction rather than the expectant voice of messianic hopes.”<sup>38</sup> Hence, the theoretical potential of “restorationism” with all its connotations for grasping the characteristic pattern of this “sociomoral reconstruction” should not be ignored simply because the term first originated from within a Christian setting. Muslim religious history, too, knows distinguishable restorationist trajectories evolving within the broader trend of Islamic revivalism as a result of the striving to recreate an ancient moral order that could determine what was imagined to constitute the true religious norms and practices in the life of the individual believers and the society at large. Social activism, involving an appeal to change the existing social order, is therefore to be considered in the elaboration of a more detailed definition of Islamic restorationism.

The delineation of a wider scale of comparison between different contextual manifestations of restorationist Islam in the period under consideration also requires rendering an account of the polemic raised by Reinhard Schulze’s thesis about an “Islamic Enlightenment” (*islamische Aufklärung*) during the eighteenth century. In an attempt at “embedding Islamic history into world history,”<sup>39</sup> Schulze initiated a debate about the character of social, political, cultural, and religious processes in the early modern Muslim world. In so doing, Schulze drew on scholarly arguments made by scholars such as Peter Gran, who saw the eighteenth century as marking an internal change in the history of the Muslim world. Gran, for example, analyzes the revival of *ḥadīth* studies in eighteenth-century Egypt as the

35 Hirschler (2005), 197.

36 Kieser (2010), 22.

37 Hughes (2011), 443.

38 Voll (1988), 88.

39 Schulze (1990), 145, my translation from German.

manifestation of a “middle-class empiricism” indicating an indigenous struggle for a “capitalist transformation,”<sup>40</sup> while the revival of theology is seen by him as a hallmark of the “culture of the state commercial sector.”<sup>41</sup> Bernard Haykel is right to foreground as the principal appeal of Gran’s and Schulze’s theses the attempt to “reinscribe Muslims as active agents into the processes of modernity, thereby diminishing the role of the West as the purveyor of modernity.”<sup>42</sup> The idea of the “Islamic roots of capitalism” was fiercely criticized by Frederick De Jong as “remarkable for a broad scale schematization largely unwarranted by the evidence presented, and, more frequently, not presented, in addition to a rather uncritical handling of source material.”<sup>43</sup> In his reply, Gran denied these claims, aligning them with an “older positivist tradition”<sup>44</sup> in historical writing.

Schulze’s thesis of an “Islamic Enlightenment” in the eighteenth century suggests investigating “enlightenment” as a universal, and not only Western, category by rereading the sources from this perspective. The proposed approach, seen by some as “radically revisionist,”<sup>45</sup> provoked a heated discussion, this time conducted primarily though not exclusively in German, which was marked by a fierce critique of Schulze’s tendentious use of sources by Bernd Radtke in a heavily polemical work.<sup>46</sup> Schulze not only argues that in the eighteenth century autonomous agents of innovation were prominent in the Muslim world, but insists that this innovation can be legitimately labeled “Islamic Enlightenment.” On the one hand, it is true that “it was in the eighteenth century that the influence of European trade and warfare became, if not a dominant, at least an important factor working on the eastern Mediterranean, Red Sea, and Indian Ocean areas.”<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, the fact that this century marks such a dividing line in the history of Middle Eastern societies and the whole Ottoman Empire in their interaction with both Western and Eastern societies does not necessarily imply that Islamic movements and their transformation resulted from “global” factors within a universal historical process. The issue of whether different cultures and societies can and should be compared still remains largely open. Some scholars tend explicitly or implicitly to follow the idea of the uniqueness of the European experience, opposing its comparison with the Muslim Middle East.<sup>48</sup> Others, such as Roger Owen, argue for the possibility of undertaking such a comparison, but through a nuanced study of different sectors, such as economy, and by rejecting “the conventional assumption of earlier orientalist,”<sup>49</sup> who characterized the Middle East as an imagined “Islamic society” analyzed by them against the backdrop of the “West.” To be sure, there

40 Gran (1998 [1979]), 49–56; cf. pp. i and iii.

41 Ibid., 132.

42 Haykel (2003), 12.

43 De Jong / Gran (1982), 381.

44 Ibid., 392.

45 Wild (1996), 272.

46 Entitled *Autochthone islamische Aufklärung im 18. Jahrhundert*: Radtke (2000); cf. Hagen und Seidensticker (1998), 83–110.

47 Bayly and Fawaz (2002), 18.

48 Nagel (1988), 367–378; Huntington (1993), 22–40.

49 Owen (1976), 112.

is a need to seek broader comparisons by involving not only the internal developments in predominantly Muslim societies but also larger-scale intercrossings between the Islamic world and Western societies. Defending the idea of plurality within historical studies, Christopher Bayly criticizes the postmodernist pursuit after about the 1980s of a dominant paradigm for writing world history that rejects “grand narratives” focusing on state centers and ideological change. This paradigm stipulates hostility to broader comparative histories by privileging the recovery of “the ‘decentered’ narrative of people without power” – an intellectual debate around what Bayly calls “the riddle of the modern.”<sup>50</sup> This debate has also considered and reconsidered the possibility of the existence of different paths to modernity or, as Shmuel Eisenstadt and Wolfgang Schluchter put it, “multiple modernities,”<sup>51</sup> with an emphasis on the plural.

Nevertheless, in his critique of the idea of an “Islamic Enlightenment,” Rudolph Peters rightly argues that “a compulsive search for, often flimsy, similarities between the Islamic and the Western European eighteenth century is not the right approach to universalizing historiography.”<sup>52</sup> In spite of some similarities and formal analogies between the Ottoman Middle East and Western Europe, the processes that foregrounded, and sometimes mainstreamed, a revived sense of adherence to Islam during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries seem to have been evoked rather by internal developments and religious and political debates within Muslim societies, than by general or globally conditioned historical trends. It is telling that examining the intellectual trends of Islamic thought in the period from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century in order to reject the typology of a united Islamic revivalism, Ahmad Dallal concludes: “Perhaps the only common feature in the writings of the four thinkers considered in this paper is the absence of the West. It is clear that the Islamic imagination had yet not been encumbered by the overwhelming encounter with the West, whose challenge was yet to be perceived.”<sup>53</sup> Drawing upon his study of Muḥammad al-Shawkānī, Bernard Haykel reaches a similar conclusion: “Traditionist reform movement in eighteenth-century Yemen does not embody any of the ideals of the European Enlightenment, central to which is the notion that only reason, and not any religious or political authority, is the ultimate arbiter of truth.”<sup>54</sup> Even Samer Akkach, who uses the term ‘enlightenment’ in his study of the eminent seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scholar ‘Abd al-Ghānī al-Nābulusī (1641–1731),<sup>55</sup> defines the notion of “Islamic Enlightenment” as problematic. Akkach adopts this term “to highlight the distinction between two modes of engagement with the ideas and precepts of the European Enlightenment, in the awakening and pre-awakening

50 Bayly (2005), 8–9.

51 Eisenstadt and Schluchter (1998), 1–18.

52 Peters (1990), 162; cf. Schulze (1996), 288.

53 Dallal (1993), 359.

54 Haykel (2003), 13.

55 The Sufi ‘Abd al-Ghānī al-Nābulusī is the author of the most notable commentary of Birgawī’s *al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*. Al-Nābulusī, *Al-Ḥadīqa al-nadiyya*, ([1873] 1991).

periods, thereby offering an alternative perspective on the roots of modernity in the Arab-Ottoman world,” but he is explicit that “the field is still much under-researched for any cogent argument.”<sup>56</sup> Generalizations are apparently still impeded by the lack of sufficient empirical studies on different contexts that would soundly proof comparability.

No matter which initial assumption one tends to accept regarding the possibility of building a typology of Islamic revivalism during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the search for any continuity and change, as well as for any comparison, and not only for a shared revivalist sense of adherence to Islam, raises the issue of social context and its relation to normative, or universal Islam. Even the question of whether it is possible to speak of “Islam” at all has been discussed among historians and anthropologists of Islam. More than three decades ago, the Egyptian-American social scientist Abdul Hamid el-Zein, equally devoted to both interpretive anthropology and the Islamic faith,<sup>57</sup> analyzed the views of Clifford Geertz (1926–2006)<sup>58</sup> and suggested the use of the plural *islams* instead of Islam.<sup>59</sup> Inspired by structuralism, el-Zein argues that “Islam,” “religion,” “economy,” “politics,” and even “saints”<sup>60</sup> do not really exist with any inherent meaning. “Islam,” he wrote, “without referring it to the facets of a system of which it is part, does not exist.”<sup>61</sup> Other scholars, such as Aziz al-Azmeh, have pursued this line of reasoning to emphasize the multiplicity of Islamic experience and even claim that “there are as many Islams as there are situations that sustain it.”<sup>62</sup>

In contrast to el-Zein, social anthropologist Ernest Gellner (1925–1995) – like some historians of Islam, such as Bernard Lewis, accused by Edward Said (1935–2003) of practicing “Orientalism” by reason of their “essentialism”<sup>63</sup> – sees Islam as a more monolithic historical entity which, unlike Judaism and Christianity, is the total “blueprint of a social order.”<sup>64</sup> From this perspective, Gellner uses the singular, speaking of “Muslim society,” in which the thinking of human beings and their social actions have been determined by an Islamic “essence.” According to Gellner, if the “essence” of Western society is nationalism, in Islam – viewed as a closed system – such an “essence” is fundamentalism which is the criterion against which the politics and the regimes are measured by sacred law (*sharī’a*). In this paradigm, not only is “civil society” inconceivable in “Muslim society,” but because of its Islamic “essence” the latter “operates effectively without intellectual pluralism.”<sup>65</sup> In a sound critique of these views, anthropologist Dale Eickelman writes that “Gellner’s claim that fundamentalism is the essence of a

56 Akkach (2007), 3.

57 For further details about the intellectual development of el-Zein, see Eickelman (1981), 361–365.

58 El-Zein’s study quoted in the next footnote deals mainly with Geertz’s *Islam Observed* (1968).

59 El-Zein (1977), 242–243.

60 Ibid., 251. The quotation marks are el-Zein’s.

61 Ibid., 252.

62 Al-Azmeh (2009), 1.

63 For a survey of the debate around “essentializing Islam,” see Evstatiev (2008), 221–243.

64 Gellner (1981) 1.

65 Gellner (1994), 22.



monolithic Muslim society runs counter to the highly diverse political and religious currents which suffuse Muslim societies and Muslim-majority politics.”<sup>66</sup> Therefore, in spite of the otherwise obvious interrelation between a given interpretation of religious beliefs or practices and the corresponding historically conditioned social context, there are significant theoretical challenges for students of Islam, including for the researchers of Islamic revivalism. What exactly connects the “great traditions” of Islam as professed by urban elites in the major Muslim centers of learning and the “little traditions” of “popular Islam” as inherited and practiced by rural populations in regions distant from one another? Considering the sometimes striking varieties of Muslim religious experience, how can one conceptualize Islam as an independent subject of historical and social inquiry?

The study of Islam in local contexts faces what Dale Eickelman calls the main challenge “to describe and analyze how the universalistic principles of Islam have been realized in various social and historical contexts without representing Islam as a seamless essence on the one hand or as a plastic congeries of beliefs and practices on the other.”<sup>67</sup> Initially, the distinction between “great” and “little” traditions helped scholars to analyze different connections between the religious traditions as known through their normative texts and exegetical paradigms and their interpretations in a given local or “popular” context. Subsequently, the use of the notion of the “local” has often led to a misleading mixture: “Local” has been equated with the “provincial” vulgarizing of the beliefs and practices conceived of as coming from an “authentic,” “high” culture. Hence, Eickelman appeals to a “middle ground” to achieve “an understanding of how the universalistic elements of Islam are practically communicated and of how modes of communication affect religious ‘universals’.”<sup>68</sup> The grasp of local traditions vis-à-vis universalistic Islam apparently requires re-conceptualizing those elements in belief and practice that have been enduringly regarded as constituting the “normative” tradition valid for any context or culture. The great traditions, however, do not necessarily or always preordain actual practice, and it is crucially import to examine how local groups and individuals react to any struggle to impose a “correct” doctrine claiming to be *the* normative interpretation of Islam. Liking all individual believers to God, Islam is not only normatively defined as the “firmest tie” (*al-‘urwa al-wuthqā*),<sup>69</sup> but actually does function as a major vehicle of communal and social cohesion.

Analyzing religion as an anthropologist,<sup>70</sup> Talal Asad makes a contribution to this debate without taking a stance against generalizations. He enters into polemics by rejecting both the nominalist thesis that Islam cannot be a theoretical object and the essentialist view of Islam as “a distinctive historical totality which orga-

66 Eickelman (1998), 262.

67 Eickelman (1982), 1–2.

68 Ibid., 11.

69 Qur’ān 2: 256; 31: 22).

70 Asad (1983), 237–259.

nizes various aspects of social life.”<sup>71</sup> For Asad, the former is typified in the work of Abdul Hamid el-Zein, while the latter is represented by many scholars, such as Ernest Gellner or Bernard Lewis. Since Asad views Islam neither as a total social structure nor a heterogeneous collection of items, in principle he tends to accept Eickelman’s suggestion to search for a “middle ground.” Asad, however, argues that the most urgent theoretical task is “a matter not so much of finding the right scale but of formulating the right concepts,” and such a concept is for him “discursive tradition”: “A tradition consists essentially of discourses that seek to instruct practitioners regarding the correct form and purpose of a given practice that, precisely because it is established, has a history. These discourses relate conceptually to *a past* (when the practice was instituted, and from which the knowledge of its point and proper performance has been transmitted) and *a future* (how the point of that practice can best be secured in the short or long term, or why it should be modified or abandoned), through *a present* (how it is linked to other practices, institutions, and social conditions). An Islamic discursive tradition is simply a tradition of Muslim discourse that addresses itself to conceptions of the Islamic past and future, with reference to a particular Islamic practice in the present.”<sup>72</sup> Tradition is not meant here as a reaction to modern forces – the starting point is rather the idea of an instituted practice that has its own history.

The concept of “orthodoxy” plays a central role in Asad’s argument. By seeing it as “crucial to all Islamic traditions,”<sup>73</sup> he breathed new life into one of the most polemical concepts in Western studies on Islam. A large number of works on Islam written by historians and social scientists have boldly underlined the dramatic splits between “orthodoxy” and “heterodoxy,” between “authentic” scripturalist Islam and its “distorted” or “deviating” replacements in the religious practices of Muslims in various local contexts. As historian Alexander Knysh puts it, “a routine procedure on the part of contemporary western researchers, both students of Islam and social anthropologists exploring the Muslim societies, consists in the *ad hoc* adoption of a judgmental frame of reference dominated by a timeless and ahistorical notion of ‘orthodoxy’.” Once adopted, this artificial notion becomes the touchstone in determining the ‘loyalty’ and ‘authenticity’ of other beliefs and teachings.”<sup>74</sup> Drawing on such an “inherited” approach, many scholars use the phrasing “Sunnī orthodoxy” simply to refer to the majority trend within Islam.<sup>75</sup> Marshal Hodgson, however, had already pointed out that “the term Sunnī is confusing, for it has been used, from the beginning, in special ways by those who wanted to use it exclusively for their own brand of orthodoxy.”<sup>76</sup> More recently, A.

71 Asad (1986), 1.

72 Ibid., 14.

73 Ibid., 15.

74 Knysh (1993), 65.

75 See, e.g., Turner (1998), 87. This model, accordingly, has stipulated the misleading denomination of major non-Sunnī Muslim groups or sects as “heterodox Islam.” A very telling example of this is the academic scholarship on Alevism. See Karolewski (2008), 434–456.

76 Hodgson (1974), I, 278.

Kevin Reinhart even speaks of “Sunnī sectarianism,” emphasizing that Sunnism as we know it is not altogether in place “until around the Saljuq period and the period immediately subsequent.”<sup>77</sup> In so doing, Reinhart refers to historian Jonathan Berkey, who shows the “long-lasting ramifications”<sup>78</sup> for the Muslim outlook during the “Sunnī revival” in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Implicitly or explicitly, such a view of the formation of Sunnism entails the notion of a relation between the establishment of orthodoxy and power.

At any rate, the phrase “Sunnī orthodoxy” is not very felicitous because it excludes the idea of a “correct model” of belief and practice among other Muslims, such as the Shī‘a, whose adherents are not less convinced of professing a “correct” faith. Scholarship in the last decades seems to have been much influenced by the scholar of comparative religion Wilfred Cantwell Smith’s view of Islam as a religion of “orthopraxy” rather than of “orthodoxy.” Arguing that Muslims share common practices even if they interpret them differently, Smith assumed that the analysis of Islam should privilege the concept of orthopraxy, presuming common practice and ritual, while shunning the notion of orthodoxy based on common beliefs.<sup>79</sup> Such an understanding shared by some Islamicists<sup>80</sup> definitely “has its limitations”<sup>81</sup> and misleads in suggesting that it is not doctrine but ritual that really matters in Islam. Adopting the notion of the existence of a “correct model” in Islam, Talal Asad argues that “a practice is Islamic because it is authorized by the discursive traditions of Islam, and is so taught to Muslims – whether by an *‘alim*, a *khatib*, a Sufi *shaykh*, or an untutored parent.”<sup>82</sup> Asad emphasizes that both el-Zein, who denies the role of orthodoxy, and Gellner, who sees it as a specific set of doctrines “at the heart of Islam,” “are missing something vital: that orthodoxy is not a mere body of opinion but a distinctive relationship – a relationship of power. Wherever Muslims have the power to regulate, uphold, require, or adjust *correct* practices, and to condemn, exclude, undermine, or replace *incorrect* ones, there is the domain of orthodoxy.”<sup>83</sup> In contradistinction to conventional views of the homogeneity of tradition, Asad points out that argument and conflict over correct practices are a part of any Islamic tradition: “Although Islamic traditions are not homogeneous, they aspire to coherence, in the way that all discursive traditions do.”<sup>84</sup>

The problem with such a concept of orthodoxy and tradition is that – despite its flexibility – there is still a theoretical tension between homogeneity and heterogeneity. The prominence of Talal Asad in contemporary social thought has, how-

77 Reinhart (2010), 210.

78 Berkey (2003), 200.

79 Smith (1957), 28.

80 For example, Denny (1994).

81 Eickelman (2002), 246.

82 Asad (1986), 15.

83 Ibid., 15. Orthodoxy in Islam is viewed as the product of a “network of power” not only by anthropologists but also by Islamicists such as Van Ess (1991), 686.

84 Ibid., 16–17.



ever, also led to many critiques of his notion of orthodoxy. Some have expressed a sharp disagreement with his “proto-theological paradigm.”<sup>85</sup> Others have seen Asad’s attempt to revive the notion of orthodoxy in the study of Islam as equally provoking confusion along with the clarifications it provides. Taking such a stance, M. Brett Wilson even speaks of a “conceptual anarchy when it comes to *orthodoxy*,”<sup>86</sup> since Asad resorts to a very unconventional use of concepts, such as *power*, *authority*, and *tradition* to redefine *orthodoxy*. These concepts, according to Wilson, remain confusing, and it is not sufficiently clear whether *orthodoxy* is “the most basic set of presumptions that underlies the various contending discourses within the discursive tradition. Or is *orthodoxy* something which the discursive tradition transmits or a *modus vivendi* it establishes for a particular context?”<sup>87</sup> On the basis of such arguments, he concludes that “eschewing the term may not only clear the path to more lucid communication (at the very least to let us argue over *different* terms), it will also mark a positive step in distancing the academic study of Islam from the language of heresiography.”<sup>88</sup> Nevertheless, as Robert Langer and Udo Simon point out, even though orthodoxy is not an autochthonous Islamic term, this does not mean that it is impossible to adopt it in the study of Islam: “To apply such a category does not depend on the condition that a word in a given language is at hand.”<sup>89</sup>

Therefore, it is only at first sight simple to argue against the “Eurocentric” term “orthodoxy” as a toolkit in the study of Islam, where the legal dictum *ikhtilāf al-umma raḥma* (“Disagreement within the Muslim community is [a sign of] God’s mercy”), established as early as at least the second century AH,<sup>90</sup> gives a sense of the possibility for internal pluralism. Nevertheless, the answer to the question of why this is so in Islam “cannot be that only Christian societies are concerned with imposing religious conformity.”<sup>91</sup> Moreover, the acknowledged “disagreement” concerns certain details in questions of law and ritual, while dissensions in dogmatics and religious doctrine (*‘aqīda*) are not encouraged: Muslims from any school are bound to strictly defend their position. Or, as the distinguished Ḥanafī scholar Ibn Nujaym al-Miṣrī (d. 1563) puts it: “The truth is what we adhere to and the false – what is maintained by our opponent.”<sup>92</sup> Thus, neither the fact that there is no Church-like institution or any general instituted council to make uniform the belief in Islam, nor the fact that the term “orthodoxy” has its origins in Christian heresiography, provides reason to ignore its theoretical and heuristic potential.

Trying to avoid the misleading usages of earlier Orientalists, Islamicists today are seemingly ready to reconsider the term “orthodoxy” as a useful category in the

85 Marranci (2008), 42.

86 Wilson (2007), 182.

87 Ibid., 183.

88 Ibid., 187.

89 Langer and Simon (2008), 280.

90 Schacht ([1964] 1982), 67.

91 Asad (1986), 345.

92 Ibn Nujaym (1418 [1998]), 418.

study of Islam and Muslim societies.<sup>93</sup> Norman Calder, who argues that the totality of Sunnī Muslim experience involves both the scholastic and the mystical tradition, rightly points out that “in order to achieve salvation as a Muslim, one has to have right belief in some sense or another. If one has right belief, wrong actions are not a barrier to achieving salvation.”<sup>94</sup> Calder regards orthodoxy as embedded in “the discursive tradition of jurists who write creeds,”<sup>95</sup> and holds that “the creed is a set of beliefs, elaborated in a discursive tradition by scholars, who are committed to and engaged with the tradition as the core of orthodoxy.”<sup>96</sup> Writing that the issue of religious authority has always been a central one in Islamic history, Gudrun Krämer emphasizes that defining correct belief, and not only correct practice, has been one of the main concerns of religious authority. She admits that Muslims have indeed spent much time and energy in regulating practice, including the minutest detail of ritual. And even though the practice has never been uniform, it was orthopraxy that was adopted as the characteristic feature of Islam: “But contrary to what is often said, the same holds true for correct belief, though even a brief foray into the field will reveal how difficult it is to establish exact boundaries here, and to define with any degree of precision what Sunni or Imami or Ismaili orthodoxy consisted of at any given point in time, and in any particular place and social milieu.”<sup>97</sup>

The diversity and disagreements within Muslim religious experience, as we have already seen, have caused some scholars to suggest that it is impossible to speak of “Islam,” “Islamic civilization,” or “Islamic tradition” on the grounds that these categories do not represent uniform and coherent historical realities. Jonathan Berkey has developed a sound counterargument against some of these postmodernist claims, even though he admits the soundness of some other objections, such as the appeal to frame the analysis of Islamic history not only through the study of “Weberian virtuosos” but also of common people. Nevertheless, Berkey is explicit in assuming that “there *is* an Islamic tradition, a set of ideas, symbols, and interrelated texts and practices which may have a normative (although contested) force.”<sup>98</sup> This notion is involved here in defining Islamic tradition. Orthodoxy has played an important role in evolving, maintaining, and transmitting the tradition. In this process, religious authority and political power have correlated in cooperation and mutual support. As Maribel Fierro demonstrated on the basis of historical material from al-Andalus, quietism has also been an equally significant stance and alternative to the participation of religious scholars in power.<sup>99</sup> Orthodoxy correlates with power, but this does not necessarily imply political power. Although orthodoxy may be conceived of as “a prize in the ongoing struggle for the power to define and control the right belief,” it is indeed “not only political

93 For a recent survey of various usages see Langer and Simon (2008), 274–279.

94 Calder (2000), 66–67.

95 Ibid., 69.

96 Ibid., 70.

97 Krämer (2006), 182–183.

98 Berkey (2001), 7.

99 Fierro (1992), 896. I am grateful to Maribel Fierro for sending me this article.

power that puts a religious authority in the position of orthodoxy, but religious authority also implies political power.”<sup>100</sup> It is my claim that Islamic revivalism in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is remarkable for a type of revitalization of Islamic identity that can be qualified as “restorationist orthodoxy.” It was passionately promoted by Muslim movements and individuals in the period under consideration in the Ottoman center, the Arab Middle East, and the Balkans, and sometimes achieved a considerable degree of religious, social, and political success in their struggle for the Islamization of society.

## II

As demonstrated in the foregoing pages, the research of which the present paper is an initial offering is inspired by broader intellectual debates over religion as a structural force in complex and plural societies. Religious history and religion as an alternate social identity, however, remains the less studied aspect of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ottoman Arab East – partly to avoid present-day political manipulations of religious identities and partly due to “the discourse of ‘post-colonialism’ and the stinging critique leveled by Edward Said against the assumptions and agenda of established Western scholarship on the Middle East.”<sup>101</sup> Research on Balkan religious history, in its turn, has been focused mainly on the institutional history of the Orthodox Church and its role in the preservation of Christians’ ethnic identity, and more recently also on the spread of some Sufi brotherhoods. However, the groups themselves, as well as the teachings of the religious scholars and leaders in Rumeli, and in many cases in the Arab East, remain largely understudied. In general, Islam during the Ottoman centuries has been studied mostly in institutional terms, with a few exceptions, such as that of Madeleine Zilfi,<sup>102</sup> who explores Islamic religious life more broadly in the seventeenth century, which is seen as a period of crisis followed by a more stable eighteenth century. Even this seminal work, however, is based on developments in Istanbul alone. As a whole, the career patterns of the *‘ulamā’* are traced prosopographically, without examining their output in intellectual history – “the great lacuna in Ottoman history.”<sup>103</sup> An issue that is attracting growing interest as it relates to all parts of the Empire is the conversion of Christians to Islam and the role of the state and various state institutions in this process.<sup>104</sup>

Islamic religious teachings, as well as the boundaries they set as to what was perceived as constituting true belief vis-à-vis heretical practices, are under-researched for several reasons related to the trends in historical research in general and to the specific professional fields of Islamic, Middle Eastern, and Ottoman

100 Langer and Simon (2008), 281.

101 Masters (2001), 2.

102 Zilfi (1988).

103 Hathaway (2004), 38.

104 Gervers and Bikhazi (1990); Baer (2007).

studies in particular. The “archival turn” around the *sharī’a* court records (*sijills*) and the accessibility of Ottoman archives resulted in the reconstruction of “many little pictures,”<sup>105</sup> hundreds and thousands of events on a microhistorical level,<sup>106</sup> leaving significant gaps in the meso- and macrohistorical analyses. Islam has been studied mostly in institutional terms, and the career patterns of ‘*ulamā*’ and Sufis were traced prosopographically without examining their intellectual role in the process of spreading religious ideas and practices. In spite of increasing scholarly interest, particularly in the eighteenth century, this intermediate period is still *terra incognita*, especially in the fields of both social and cultural history; its intellectual production “has hardly been studied.”<sup>107</sup> Although more recently “scholarly interest in the cultural and intellectual life of the Ottomans seems to have been rekindled” regarding such fields as the study of historiography,<sup>108</sup> there is still an uneven tendency to eschew cultural history<sup>109</sup> and shun intellectual, including religious, interplay. This severely dims the historical understanding of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which are crucially important in linking the classical and post-classical achievements of Islamic thought with the great modern interaction between Muslim and Western societies.

In the current state of research, the role of the Qāḍīzādeli movement outside of Istanbul is unclear, and the spread of its ideas in the Arab East has until now lacked significant scholarly attention. A chapter from Zilfi’s *The Politics of Piety*,<sup>110</sup> written after an insightful article in Turkish by Ahmet Yaşar Ocak outlined the Qāḍīzādelis as a subject that deserves special attention,<sup>111</sup> contains what is still the only published historical survey of the movement, while the only monographic studies devoted to it are the unpublished Ph.D. dissertations of Necati Öztürk and Semiramis Çavuşoğlu.<sup>112</sup> These three works, however, focus heavily on the institutional and metropolitan aspects of the Qāḍīzādelis against the backdrop of the central imperial policies, the ‘*ilmiye* or the movement’s vehement struggle against the Sufis. Öztürk, to whom we owe the earliest among those studies, discussed the notorious struggle between the Qāḍīzādelis and the Sufis by pointing out that some of their differences were exaggerated: “It would not be an overestimation to state that the whole controversy between the Qāḍīzādelis and the Şūfīs hinged on their differences of view about this issue [i.e. *bid’a*]. The whole Qāḍīzāde movement may, indeed, be seen as a reaction by a group of preachers in the seventeenth century against the religious laxity which they saw around them. The main focus of their attack was existing

105 Hathaway (2004), 33; cf. Peirce (2004), 10.

106 On the microhistorical approach see Ze’evi (1998), 47–50.

107 Peters (1990), 160; cf. Terzioğlu (2002), 141.

108 Piterberg (2003), 50. Among the notable earlier exceptions of a book devoted to intellectual history is Fleischer (1986).

109 Peirce (2004), 13–17.

110 Zilfi (1988), 129–182.

111 Ocak (1979–1983), 208–225.

112 Öztürk (1981); Çavuşoğlu (1990).

practices which they regarded as innovations.”<sup>113</sup>

It seems that even the radical opposition between the Sufis and Qāḍīzādelis seems debatable and cannot be taken for granted. Basically, for a long time scholarship was under the influence of a view promoted by Orientalists such as Sir Hamilton A. R. Gibb (1895–1971), according to whom Sufism opposed orthodoxy and the “Arab idea” of Islam; hence a “violent resistance to Sufism” has been expressed at least since the eighth/fourteenth century by “the fundamentalist Hanbalite, Ibn Taimīya, and his small body of disciples.”<sup>114</sup> Subsequently, Fazlur Rahman coined the term “neo-Sufism” to denominate more specifically the eighteenth-century Sufi revival, which “tended to regenerate orthodox activism.”<sup>115</sup> Until some two decades ago, it was widely accepted that this “neo-Sufism” combined a revivalist Wahhābī creed with a Sufi organizational structure. This convenient model, however, was broken by Rex S. O’Fahey and Bernd Radtke.<sup>116</sup> Sharing their view, Mark Sedgwick emphasized that now for most researchers “Gibb’s and Fazlur Rahman’s placing of Sufism in opposition to orthodoxy is unjustified.”<sup>117</sup> In his turn, John Voll, who has extensively used the term “neo-Sufism,” suggested a new reconsideration by pointing out that “Whether or not the label of ‘Neo-Sufi’ is appropriate for the activist orders of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, these brotherhoods were a significant force in the Muslim world.”<sup>118</sup> The historian Derin Terzioğlu suggests that Sufi preachers had distinguished themselves as political commentators long before the emergence of the Qāḍīzādelis. She argues that Sufi and non-Sufi preachers during the seventeenth century “had complex relationships, which are not always accurately captured by such words as ‘opposition’, ‘antagonism’ and ‘conflict’. To the contrary, a pronounced emphasis on adherence to the Sunna and a puritanical outlook on Ottoman social and cultural life united the reform visions of both groups.”<sup>119</sup> Was then the radical struggle against unbelief promoted by the Qāḍīzādelis, but apparently not only by them, part of a deeper and larger-scale religious trend that spanned Muslim societies during the period under consideration?

The Qāḍīzādeli preachers did not only denounce practices of disbelief and “innovation” by warning their listeners, but “sought to provoke the public and ultimately the Ottoman authorities into action.”<sup>120</sup> Dror Ze’evi stresses that the Muslim reform movements during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries “did not offer messianic salvation in the form of a charismatic leader [...]. Their main objective was strict adherence to an orthodox interpretation of the law.” Ze’evi concludes

113 Öztürk, *op. cit.*, 316–317.

114 Gibb ([1945]1972), 24.

115 Rahman (1966), 195.

116 O’Fahey (1990), 1–9 and, respectively, O’Fahey and Radtke (1993), 52–87.

117 Sedgwick (2005), 28.

118 Voll (2008), 317.

119 Terzioğlu (2010), 243.

120 Le Gall (2004), 3.



that the “Qāḍīzādeli conflict had spread across the Ottoman universe,”<sup>121</sup> unfortunately without discussing the character and channels of this spreading. The few other studies mentioning the Qāḍīzādelis within the social and religious context of the Arab East all focus on late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century developments in Egypt. Jane Hathaway (1997:667), analyzing the Qāḍīzādeli opposition to Sabbatai Sevi, notes that “in his zeal to emulate the original Muslim community at Medina, Vānī Meḥmed Efendi conceived a goal of making Istanbul a purely Muslim city.”<sup>122</sup> Two other studies<sup>123</sup> consider an incident around the battered dervishes of Bab Zuwayla, with the Qāḍīzādelis qualifying it as proto-Wahhābī *fitna* in Ottoman Cairo. Later, one of them, Barbara Flemming, revisited the incident and suggested that it was not proto-Wahhābī as much as neo-Qāḍīzādeli.<sup>124</sup> Rudolph Peters and Barbara Flemming seem to be the only ones to have touched upon a possible connection between the Istanbul movement and the Wahhābī surge in the Arabian Peninsula.

The search for such a relation, however, has never been undertaken in an earlier scholarly work. In their studies on Wahhābiyya, Michael Cook, Alexander Knysh, and Hamid Algar<sup>125</sup> do not mention any connection with the Qāḍīzādelis. Contemporary Saudi Arabian historians seem to focus on puzzling out the local details without conceptualizing the movement initiated by Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb in Najd within the broader Islamic tradition and society.<sup>126</sup> The contextualization of the Wahhābī movement vis-à-vis its Qāḍīzādeli predecessor still awaits its researchers. The situation is similar regarding the historical evidence at our disposal for the radical purification of public morality in Bilād al-Shām during the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. Sources such as al-Budayrī’s *Daily Events in Damascus*<sup>127</sup> and *sijills* provide information about dramatic debates over piety and the measures taken by some ‘ulamā’ and preachers against the proliferation of unbelief through *bid‘a*, wrongdoing, and “evil” (*sharr*), ranging from evil talk to wine drinking and prostitution, and from disputes over coffee drinking to tobacco smoking.<sup>128</sup> Again, it is unclear whether and how such dramatic events in the Arab East were an echo of the earlier Qāḍīzādeli orthodox impulse or of the almost contemporaneous Wahhābī surge to re-draw the boundaries of correct religious belief and practice.

Among the few discussions of the Qāḍīzādeli impact in the Balkans is provided by Derin Terzioğlu, who touches upon some of the earliest traces of the movement’s presence in Anatolia and Rumeli, arguing that the followers of Birgawī had grown

121 Ze’evi (2006), 95.

122 Hathaway (1997), 667.

123 Flemming (1976), 55–65; Peters (1987), 93–115.

124 Barbara Flemming, unpublished paper given at a conference in Leiden (2002).

125 Cook (1992), 191–202; Knysh (2004), 3–26; and Algar (2002).

126 Al-‘Uthaymīn (2009).

127 Al-Budayrī, *Ḥawāḍith Dimashq al-Yawmiyya* (1959). For more details about al-Budayrī and his eighteenth-century chronicle in Arabic, see Masters (1994), 354–356.

128 Rafeq (1990), 181.

up as a social group identifiable not only in Istanbul, but also in the Balkans. She mentions a didactic-cum-comic work composed by a certain Ḥacī Aḥmed in the town of Yanya (Yanina) in northwestern Greece in 1056/1646–1647. The book includes an inventory of offensive social types by cursing them and also contains an entry on “Birgivī followers (Birgivīler), who show obstinacy in matters in which they are in the wrong.”<sup>129</sup> In a recent article, Rossitsa Gradeva mentions the issue of orthodoxy in her discussion of the movement and its possible influence in Sofia, referring to Evliya Çelebi (d. 1682), according to whom Sheikh Mehmed known as Qāḍīzāde “manifested himself here.” Gradeva interprets this passage not as evidence that the founder of the movement was born in Sofia but in the sense that, more importantly, his ideas were spread in the town.<sup>130</sup> For now, however, only speculative hypotheses can be raised, and the dissemination of Qāḍīzādeli teachings throughout the Ottoman European territories remains a blank area. Kerima Filan analyzes the Qāḍīzādeli type of “religious fanaticism” in Sarajevo during the eighteenth century based on notes (*majmua*) by Mula Mustafa Bašeski written between 1760 and 1805. Filan argues that the contents of the notes show that Sarajevo “fanatics” wanted to transform the religious life of the city in the same way “as the Qāḍīzādelis did in Istanbul in seventeenth century.”<sup>131</sup>

The Oriental Department of the Bulgarian National Library in Sofia has preserved a collection of manuscripts including local copies and commentaries of Muḥammad Birgawī’s *al-Tarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, whose content and interrelation within the whole of the transregional movement that carries the name of Birgawī’s title is unstudied. Although paleographer Stoyanka Kenderova does not mention the Qāḍīzādeli movement as such, her work on processing, cataloguing, and analyzing the Arabic and Ottoman Turkish manuscripts from such important local Rumeli *waqf* library collections as the one in Samokov<sup>132</sup> provides an initial ground for further research, on the basis of which different parallels and generalization can be drawn. Such further work will reveal the trajectories of the spread of Muḥammad al-Birgawī’s ideas through copies and commentaries on his *al-Tarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* written by Muslim intellectuals in the Balkans, including in the lands of modern-day Bulgaria. The St. Petersburg Islamicist Alikber Alikberov, who also worked on the Samokov *waqf* library preserved at the National Library in Sofia, has published electronically a short but informative analytical article in Russian defining the *al-Tarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* network as an “ecumenical movement in Islam,” whose Balkan version is characterized by an anti-Christian polemic.<sup>133</sup>

Recently, the Ottomanist Marinos Sariyannis suggested an insightful approach to the Qāḍīzādelis’ role in social and political history by proposing to study its

129 Ḥacī Aḥmed, *Risāle-i ‘acībe*, Topkapı, MS., 96b–98b; as quoted by Terzioğlu (1999), 202.

130 Gradeva (2010), 53.

131 Filan (2009), 186; see also Filan (2008), 335–337.

132 Kenderova (2002).

133 Alikberov (accessed March 3, 2012), <<http://islamica.ru/history-of-islam/?uid=95>>. I would like to thank my fellow Arabist Dr. Anka Stoilova, archivist at the National Library in Sofia, for pointing me to this article as well as for her ceaseless help in the work with Arabic manuscripts.

“well-known ‘fundamentalism’ that arose throughout the seventeenth century in the light of the emergence of new mercantile strata in the same period.”<sup>134</sup> He argues that the movement served the new classes in their struggle for political power in Istanbul and resorts to the paradigm of Max Weber to demonstrate that “Kadıızadeli-minded statesmen could use the ‘fundamentalist’ ethics in promoting ‘free-trade’ measures no matter whether these ethics really applied to the point, just like their Puritan counterparts’ commercial behavior was judged Christian-like, no matter whether Protestant ethics proposed specific ways of economic practice.”<sup>135</sup> The proposed social historical approach sometimes tends to belittle the significance of the few thorough studies devoted to the Qāḍīzadelis’ role in intellectual and religious history, such as the articles of Dina Le Gall or Derin Terzioğlu mentioned above. There is no doubt that the phenomenon needs a wider social and political interpretation, but such a broadening of analysis still necessitates clarifying the precise religious and intellectual role of the movement.

Tellingly, Sariyannis notices the largely unsatisfactory state of current research by emphasizing that while Ottoman historians had devoted special chapters<sup>136</sup> to the Qāḍīzadelis, “it is strange that such an important historical movement as the Kadıızadeli has been studied so little by Ottomanists” and that “twentieth-century scholars have almost entirely neglected the issue.”<sup>137</sup> And if this is so within Ottoman studies, Middle Eastern and Islamic studies are yet to elaborate a proper historical reconstruction of the transregional and historical role of the Qāḍīzadelis against the backdrop of developments not only in Istanbul but elsewhere in the Ottoman universe. It would hardly be exaggerated to state that the only “firm” element, the common denominator of almost all previous studies on the Qāḍīzadeli movement, is its loose definition by categories, such as orthodoxy, revivalism, fundamentalism, or even radicalism, which apparently stem from the dedicated struggle of its adherents against Sufi and any other blasphemous innovation (*bid‘a*) because of which society has decayed, going astray from the right path of correct belief. Since the Qāḍīzadelis struggled against all perpetrators of heretical “innovations,” principal among whom were the Sufis, Derin Terzioğlu even designated the mosque preachers’ teaching “a Salafī message,”<sup>138</sup> while Fariba Zarinebaf, in her recent book on crime and punishment in Istanbul, refers to “the conservative Kadıızadeli faction.”<sup>139</sup> Such a complicated issue of terminology<sup>140</sup> is among the factors enjoining further reflection around the question of how to qualify the movement inside the larger Islamic tradition and society.

134 Sariyannis (2012), 263.

135 Ibid., 289.

136 Kātib Çelebi, *Fezleke*, Vol. 2 (1286/1870), 155, 182–183; Kātib Çelebi, *The Balance of Truth* (1957), 128–131, 132–134.

137 Ibid., 266.

138 Terzioğlu (1999), 194. Although the elaboration of *Salafīyya* as related to Qāḍīzadelis is out of the scope of this paper, it must be noted that the designation “Salafī,” and especially “Salafism,” may be very confusing as applied to phenomena prior to the twentieth century. See Lauzière (2010), 369–389.

139 Zarinebaf (2010), 106.

140 See Knysh (2011), 424–426.



### III

The elaboration of a broader but contextually informed historical account of how revivalist groups during the seventeenth and eighteenth Ottoman centuries moved across the borderlines of true belief and unbelief by striving to revive and restore Islamic identity requires a comparative approach which, by juxtaposing cases from different regions, can reveal what is common and what is locally specific. Although the formulation of a precise approach is, of course, out of the scope of the current preliminary notes, the accumulated source material, of which I have only processed a part in detail, allows me to suggest a first approximation of a set of research steps, taking into account the remainder of the evidence to be scrutinized. I suggest a threefold tentative framework for inquiry that involves investigating:

- 1 the continuous and historically changing elements in the domain of religious authority as a force channeling orthodoxy and setting the boundaries between belief and unbelief in different ways, including by stressing the duty of “commanding right and forbidding wrong” (*al-amr bi l-ma'rūf wa n-nahy 'an al-munkar*) within the Muslim community;
- 2 the role of local and translocal interpersonal bonds and chains across the Ottoman territories for the formal or informal networking of religious scholars on the basis of shared patterns and modes of adherence to Islam assuming its revival by restoring an “original” state of true belief and practice;
- 3 the cross-temporal interdependencies within the transmission of religious knowledge stipulating common sources of inspiration and study, shared references to predecessors and contemporaries, and observance of boundary-drawing religious imperatives referring to the ideas of what constitutes true belief and, respectively, unbelief, shared by the Qāḍīzādelis and other revivalist currents and intellectuals promoting restorationist orthodoxy, such as the later Wahhābī movement or the earlier thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Ḥanbalītes of Damascus, Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 1351).

From the outset, the initial group of selected concepts is to include such key terms as *takfīr* (declaring that someone is a *kāfir* or unbeliever) and its consequences; *ridḍa* or *irtidād* (apostasy) as manifested by “expressions of unbelief”<sup>141</sup> and *shirk* (polytheism or “associanism”); *jihād* (holy struggle); *al-salaf* (the predecessors, the first three generations of Islam) and *al-khalaf* (the successors, the following generations of the Muslim community); *bid'a* (innovation) as a vehicle on the path of disbelief; and *hijra* (the “emigration,” implying the avoidance of associa-

141 Peters and De Vries (1976–77), 3.

tion with disbelievers). Further analysis of how those concepts are adopted and transformed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries will broaden the understanding of the notion of *ihyā' al-Sunna* (the revival of the Prophet's way) as a main element in the matrix of orthodoxy in this period.

This approach requires a wide range of published and unpublished sources: general and local histories for the period in question, as well as biographical literature and dictionaries containing large amounts of information on '*ulamā*' and outstanding Sufis who functioned in the Ottoman provinces under study. *Majmu'a* ("collections"), which contain vita of important holy men from the localities where they were compiled, are an important source of information for local developments. Special attention should be paid to the content itself of works from the field of *fiqh* and dogmatic theology (*kalām*) as well as to the prosopographical study of *athbāt* (works listing the books one had a certificate to teach) by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scholars. Collections of *fatwas*, especially those of local *muf-tis*, are also important. The often limited and biased information contained in the *sijills* could be balanced with a wide range of other documentation contained in the *mühimme*, *şikâyet* and *ahkâm defters*, that is registers of important matters, of grievances and of orders, kept in the capital and currently housed in the Başbaa kanlık Osmanlı arşivi in Istanbul, which contain orders addressed to all Ottoman provinces, as well as in the various collections of single documents preserved in the same archive.

The entanglements between the schools of Islamic law, in spite of the leading role of the Ḥanafī *madhhab* across the Ottoman Empire, must also be constantly reconsidered to reveal the precise parameters of the process by which they were transcended. This will explain such religious transformations as the adoption of some ideas from Ibn Taymiyya and particularly from his influential pulpit Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya by Birgawī and his Qāḍizādeli followers, who remained Ḥanafīs in their *madhhab* affiliation. Although such a claim needs further elaboration, it may be argued that the Qāḍizādeli orthodox impulse shares a common pattern of intensification of Islamic identity with Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb and other revivalist thinkers and social movements. Foregrounding the understudied links with Ibn Taymiyya and other scholars through a textual and prosopographical study along the tentative threefold framework presented above will shed further light on the issue of whether the revived interest in the Damascene Ḥanbalītes was a continuation of a trend among some Ottoman '*ulamā*' traceable back to the sixteenth century, as Terzioğlu suggests.<sup>142</sup> Sometimes the apparent similarities can be misleading. In a thorough recent study of the changing views of Ibn Taymiyya among non-Ḥanbalī Sunni scholars, Khaled El-Rouayheb assumes that "the views of Birgiwī and his Kadizadeli followers may have been rooted, not in the thought of Ibn Taymiyya, but in an intolerant current within the Ḥanafī-Māturīdī

142 Terzioğlu (2007), 247. On the use of Ibn Taymiyya's works, and particularly his fatwas, by Birgawī see al-'Arrābī (1425/2004), 114.

school, represented by such scholars as ‘Alā’ al-Dīn al-Bukhārī (d. 1438), who famously declared both Ibn ‘Arabi and Ibn Taymiyya unbelievers.”<sup>143</sup> Al-Birgawī’s *al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya* is so heavily loaded with traditions (*ḥadīths*) that even Michael Cook writes undecidedly that “whether we should see in this an indication of the persistence of a traditionalist trend in Ḥanafism, antithetical to the predominant Māturīdite theology, is more than I can say.”<sup>144</sup>

Explicitly, al-Birgawī himself admits that he draws upon Ibn al-Qayyim’s *Ighāthat al-lahfān*<sup>145</sup> in a treatise attributed to the inspirer of the Qāḍīzādelis in which he deals with the topic of the “visitation of graves” (*ziyārat al-qubūr*) – a practice that has caused a vivid polemical struggle between the different Islamic currents throughout the centuries:

I have selected these pages from the book of Imam Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya’s *Ighāthat al-lahfān min maṣāi’ d al-shayṭān*, adding also some things which I have found in other works, because many nowadays worship some of the graves like idols. They pray next to them, perform the sacrificial rite, do things and say words which do not befit believers. Thereby, I wanted to clarify what is fixed in *sharī’a* regarding this issue so anyone who is determined to correct his faith, can start discerning the right from the wrong, the truth from the lie of the Devil, the salvation from the eternal torment in Hell, and the gate to Paradise.<sup>146</sup>

Nevertheless, as often has happened in Islamic history, one and the same scholar can adopt views that, at first sight, seem to contradict to one another. In this case, following Ibn al-Qayyim in the debates over the visitation of graves does not necessarily mean that al-Birgawī is influenced by the noted Ḥanbalīte of Damascus in any aspect of religious doctrine. In his *al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, al-Birgawī treated the study of disciplines such as speculative theology (*kalām*) and logic (*manṭiq*) as *farḍ kifāya* – a collective duty of the Muslim community. And, as El-Rouayheb rightly stresses, such a view was “vehemently denied by Ibn al-Qayyim,”<sup>147</sup> which can be explained by the contextual Ottoman traditions in this period and by the complexity of Islamic learning in general. Even though a complete borrowing from Ibn Taymiyya or Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya should be imputed neither to al-Birgawī nor to all his Qāḍīzādeli followers, it may be assumed that the evidence of such an influence should not be neglected either.

Additional examples, perhaps more indicative of the spread of a shared intensification of orthodox belief in the centuries under consideration, are provided by the revived call for the mentioned ruthless struggle against the proliferation of blasphemous innovation (*bid’a*), as well as for a strict performing of the duty of

143 El-Rouayheb (2010), 304.

144 Cook (2004), 324, footnote 127.

145 Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Ighāthat al-lahfān fī ḥukm ṭalāq al-ghaḍbān*, 1327/1909–1910.

146 Al-Birgawī, *Ziyārat al-qubūr*, 1996, 7.

147 El-Rouayheb (2010), 303. For the revival of logical studies during the seventeenth century see El-Rouayheb (2005), 1–19.

“commanding right and forbidding wrong” (*al-amr bi l-ma ‘rūf wa n-nahy ‘an al-munkar*), which prior to the seventeenth century “does not seem to have been a prominent feature of the Ottoman religious scene.”<sup>148</sup> In the whole second chapter of his *al-Tarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, al-Birgawī extensively dealt with the pernicious “innovations” by adducing a great deal of *hadīth* material to demonstrate the importance of the subject:

Ibn al-Ḥārith reports that the Prophet said: There is no community (*umma*) introducing in its religion innovations after its prophet which did not thus destroy the Sunna (*mā min ummatin abda ‘at ba ‘da nabiyyihā fī dīniha bid ‘atan illā aḍā ‘at mithlahā al-sunna*).<sup>149</sup>

The Qāḍīzādeli followers of al-Birgawī were notorious for their insistence that it was the unavoidable duty of each true Muslim to actively “command right and forbid wrong.” As Madeline Zilfi writes, Qāḍīzāde Meḥmed “asked of his adherents not only that they purify their own lives, but that they seek out sinners and in effect force them back onto ‘the straight path’.” Indeed, to mention the duty of *al-amr bi l-ma ‘rūf* was the task of all preachers, but Qāḍīzāde “introduced an ‘activist element’ that demanded that his listeners not only take an intellectual position but strive to make that position a reality in the community at large.”<sup>150</sup> Kātib Çelebi, himself a disciple of Qāḍīzāde, covered the development of the movement, trying to take a neutral stance to its controversies with the Sufis. Nevertheless, Kātib Çelebi noted that the Qāḍīzādelis were too demanding of the believers:

[...] If the people of any age after that of the Prophet were to scrutinize their own mode of life and compare it with the Sunna, they would find a wide discrepancy [...] Scarcely any of the sayings or doings of any age are untainted by innovation [...] For the rulers, what is necessary is to protect the Muslim social order and to maintain the obligations and principles of Islam among the people. As for the preachers, they will have done their duty if they gently admonish and advise the people to turn towards the Sunna and to beware of innovation (*bid ‘a*). The duty of complying belongs to the people; they cannot be forced to comply.”<sup>151</sup>

Nevertheless, the feeling of there having been a deviation from the straight path and of the need for a new sociomoral reconstruction, which motivated the passionate efforts of the metropolitan Qāḍīzādeli movement, seemingly also spanned the Ottoman Arab world in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A good example is Damascus during the reign of the powerful family of local notables, the ‘Aẓms (1725–1783). Whether it be due to the policy of the ‘Aẓms or to a “neo-Qāḍīzādeli” influence spread eastwards, or to a combination of those factors, breaches of the moral code requiring the pursuit of “commanding right and forbidding wrong” strongly attracted public attention. In the social context of a

148 Cook (2004), 328.

149 Al-Birgawī, *Al-Tarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, 1379/1960, 8.

150 Zilfi (1988), 137.

151 Kātib Çelebi, *The Balance of Truth* (1957), 90.

predominantly Islamic setting, the appearances related to those breaches were articulated in religious terms. Muslims conceived of them as the result of a long-lasting distortion of their original faith, the corruption of which was a consequence of the proliferation of innovation (*bid'a*). As Abdul-Karim Rafeq writes, breaches of the moral code “ranged from evil talk to wine drinking and prostitution.” Coffee and tobacco, unlike opium, which was socially accepted and widespread, were prohibited earlier, but smoking was again legalized in the late sixteenth century, “and its addicts included a number of highly-placed ‘*ulamā*’ in Damascus.”<sup>152</sup> Al-Budayrī censures the moral laxity of his fellow Damascenes in a time when women outnumbered men in sitting by the river, eating, drinking coffee, and smoking tobacco. Prostitution increased in Damascus in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but not to the extent noted by the chroniclers in the eighteenth century:

In those days the depravity grew (*izdāda al-fasād*), the worshipers were oppressed (*ẓalumat al-'ubbād*), the number of the lewd women (*banāt al-hawā'*) in the bazaars increased night and day. Among the events that happened during the reign of As'ad Pasha [al-'Azm] those days is the following. A prostitute was infatuated, falling in love with a young man from the Turks who fell ill, so she vowed that if he was cured of his illness she would arrange a celebration in his honor with Shaykh Arslan. Soon, the young man did recover and the prostitutes of the city (*mūmisāt al-balad*) gathered in a procession across the bazaars of Damascus, carrying candles, lamps and incense burners with fragrance, flapping their hands and beating tambourines. The people crowded around them in a queue and rejoiced at them while the prostitutes were with unveiled faces and with their hair loose. And there was nobody to censure this reprehensible act (*wa mā thamma nākir li-hādha l-munkar*) whilst the pious and devout people just raised their voice crying “Allah is the greatest” (*Allāhu akbar*).<sup>153</sup>

If the demands of pious individuals in Damascus faced the indifference of the ruling elite and even the judicial authorities, developments in Arabia took another direction – towards the restoration of the original true belief and social behavior of Muslims. In Najd, the central Arabian Peninsula, Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb and his followers initiated a rigorously puritanical movement, which soon established an alliance with the Saudi family:

[Sa'ūd] ordered the inhabitants of Jeddah and Mecca to give up the smoking of tobacco which is not permitted for selling in the butteries. He ordered the people to enter the mosques when they listen to the call for prayer (*al-ādhān*). He ordered the ‘*ulamā*’ to read the works composed by Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb.<sup>154</sup>

152 Rafeq (1990), 181.

153 Al-Budayrī, *Hawādith Dimashq al-Yawmiyya 1154–1176 A.H. / 1741–1763*, 1959, 112.

154 Daḥlān, Aḥmad ibn Zaynī, *Khulāṣat al-kalām*, 1305/1887, 292.



As a powerful movement against the proliferation of *bid'a*, the Wahhābiyya often practiced violent *takfīr* towards their “corrupted” contemporary Arabian society, which they regarded as the land of savagery, blasphemy and unbelief. The Wahhābī steps to restore the interpretation of Islam as practices by the *salaf* remind some of the actions taken in the preceding century by the Qāḍīzādelis. However, if in Istanbul the Qāḍīzādeli alliance with the imperial power came to an end in the 1680s, their orthodox mode of intensification of Islamic identity presumably extended in other directions to entangle with the great revival and reform movements of the eighteenth century.

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